The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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"WHERE IS YOUR GOD?"

"Where is your God?" they say.
Answer them, Lord most holy!
Reveal thy secret way
Of visiting the lowly:
Not wrapped in moving cloud
Or nightly-resting fire,
But veiled within the shroud
Of silent, high desire.

Come not in flashing storm,
Or bursting frown of thunder;
Come in the viewless form
Of wakening love and wonder,
Of duty grown divine,
The restless spirit still;
Of sorrows taught to shine,
As shadows of thy will.

O God! the pure alone—
E'en in their deep confessing—
Can see thee as their own,
And find the perfect blessing;
Yet to each waiting soul
Speak in thy still, small voice,
Till broken love's made whole,
And saddened hearts rejoice.

—*James Martineau.*

COMMUNION ADDRESS.

I welcome you, on the very threshold of our conference, to this innermost and tenderest service of our religious life.

I think it is not without its interest, too, that it is unquestionably the oldest of all our Christian institutions. The beginning of the Christian Church was not in meetings for worship or preaching, but in simple friendly gatherings to break bread together in memory of Christ. In "gladness and singleness of heart," it says; and indeed it is a wonderful thing to think how, even so soon after the crucifixion, an instinct of triumphant joy had lifted that breaking bread together out of its associations of gloom and death into a glad triumphal faith that looked toward some great blessing to come to men through him. They could not have told what that blessing was really to be; but it was a true outgoing of their hearts which loved to remember him, and they seemed to come nearer to him and nearer to each other in this little memorial act.

There is another thought which comes to me afresh every time I read those few brief sentences in which Paul tells of the beginning of this memorial, that last evening, "the same night in which he was betrayed." I do not think we put the stress we might on the curious closeness of a really contemporary record with which those words of Paul take us right back to the time and to the perspective of Christ's place already in human hearts. Why, the allusions in this passage to his betrayal and to his blood, being about to be shed, and to the great faith in which Jesus had bade them take these things, as witnesses and covenants, into the new life which lay before them as his disciples,—I tell you these things really carry with them all the main characteristics of the gospel story. Ah, the Gospels them-

selves were not written till a generation or two later; and I find many people feeling as if that lapse of time made the whole gospel story a little uncertain, as if it needed some closer confirmation. But here we have that very confirmation! Paul was writing this about him whom he already calls "*the Lord Jesus*," within twenty-five years of the time when Jesus had been crucified. What is twenty-five years? Why, it is ten years more than that since I used to minister in this place; and all the events of that time, and the men and women who were with me here, are still like things of to-day. And Paul was ten years *nearer* to these things of which he was writing, and had been in and out among those to whom these things were the great memories of their lives. And so this is one help to me every time I read these words and join in this service. I feel I get my feet upon the rock again: I am carried right back to the time, and the very spirit of the time, out of which our whole Christian faith has grown, and this little service which was at the very root of all its growth.

And so it helps us to take our place in thought with those disciples, and with that gracious One who sat among them at the last supper he should have with them. I see him take the basin of water and the towel, and go round among them washing their feet,—to teach them, after their disputings which of them should be the greatest, that in his kingdom of the new life greatness should come by serving.

I see him also, as the supper was ending, repeating the little act with which every such Jewish supper must have begun,—breaking another of the Passover cakes that each might eat a morsel with him, and again passing round the cup, as the pledge of a new covenant in his blood,—a sort of "loving cup" which they should henceforth drink together in remembrance of him. For it must never be forgotten that this little rite, almost in the very form in which we keep the communion still, was simply the little commemoration with which the Sabbath supper began—and begins still—in every Jewish household, and which Jesus must have been familiar with from childhood. And so he repeats it with them now.

Did he mean to institute it as a binding form forever? Who can tell just how much thought he had of what that little ancient rite thus associated with their leader might do to keep them together? The greater fact is that it so took hold of their hearts that they loved to repeat it, and it spread and grew with all the growth of Christian life, and always, whatever *other* meanings might be added on, always with *this* meaning at the heart of it,—of its being the reminder and the sign of their belonging to him, and of their belonging to one another! And, if now and then something in it seems like perpetuating some of those superstitions and excrescences which grew on to it in the ages after Christ, I think it should be easier to put all such associations away, because its real connection is far more with the long line of the reformers; for one of the first things done in almost every movement of reformation has been to rescue this communion from its mystical, its sacerdotal, its "mass" and sacrificial meanings, and to restore it to its ancient, simple, beautiful meanings, of a loving commemoration of the Master and fellowship and comradeship among his people.

I know that some shrink from the material symbolism of it. And yet I do not know why we should. With all the newness and modernism of our age there is at the heart of it a great liking for ancient and venerable forms. Human nature cannot do without forms, and this little commemoration and communion of eating and drinking together is based upon an outward symbolism of fidelity that is as old as humanity. Has it ever struck you how such a little *material* thing may be especially impressive? Edward Everett Hale told me that, when he went to Transylvania, among our churches there he felt the value of the communion as he had never felt it before! For he did not understand Hungarian, and the service was all in an unknown tongue; but when there came the bread and the cup in the communion,—*that* was something in a universal language, and made the whole service alive!

But, after all, these are comparatively outward things, and I want my deepest thought for you to be not just the freshening of these outward meanings, but the deepening of that which is at the very heart of it,—our *loving discipleship* to Christ, and our *brotherhood and comradeship* in that discipleship.

Ah, friends, I must not now attempt to speak of all the help which this conscious attitude of discipleship to Christ may give to us. But let me briefly outline one or two of the ways in which it helps us in this religious faith and service which has drawn us here to-day.

For one thing, it helps to keep our faith more even and steadfast. If I am to depend simply on my own discerning of religious things,—well, there are times when I can see them clearly, but there are other times when I seem to see nothing; and, if my own seeing were all, I should be apt to sink into utter doubt. But with this great Master, holding his hand, as it were, I know the divine things are still true. *I* may be in the shadow, but I know the light is there. In that light, shining along the ages, some things are settled: God *is*, and human duty and the eternal life. And, even when for a time I cannot see them, I hold to them by faith in him, in the sense of how in him the light was never dim.

And so again I think that this distinct discipleship to Christ lifts us out of all small self-consciousness in this life of faith. Self-consciousness is the bane of life. I am bidden to "work out my own thought, and hold it, because *it* is *mine*." That is the very thing I want to get away from. I do not want to think of my great trust in God and righteousness and heaven as just *my* thought. I do not want to feel it as something I have seen and set up for myself. When I do think of it that way, it seems a smaller thing, and less sure; and I begin to distrust it. I want to rise out of that. Of course I must have thought these things, and seen them with my own soul; but I do not want *that* to be my habitual way of looking at them, or of presenting them to others.

I shall never forget how this came to me early in my ministry. I had come here just forty years ago from a small village congregation, and found myself at once—a very young man, only a few years out of college—let here to minister to a great congregation of men and women of older years, and many of them of ripe wisdom and experience. And it came to me, How could I be much help to *them?* Who was *I* that I should have to teach *them?* And then it was that there came this sense of how it was not in my own strength I was standing here; that this whole institution, and my part in it, were of Christ. I felt a new meaning in Paul's words,—"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." It came to me in its most special force in this communion service, and I can only say that it made my ministry from that hour a different and better thing. It is not just *my truth* I preach. I like to feel that I am joining in with my fellow-creatures. I am simply sharing in the greatest life of the race. I feel as one of the great family, clasping the feet of God and humbly treading together the ways of the immortal life. And in this great leader of souls it is just this vast fellowship I feel, and in which I lose *myself*, and rise into something of that loftier faith and spirit which I am looking to and trying to follow.

And one other help—perhaps the greatest—from this distinct feeling of discipleship to Christ. I think it gives strength and patience to our moral effort and to all the moral effort of the world. In that leadership of Christ I feel the touch of that long line of faithful souls who, through the ages, have still rolled on the tide of the world's battle against wrong and sin. What has helped all the thousands and ten thousands who have joined in that mighty conflict, and are in it still? I believe it is, most of all, this sense of the leadership and headship of Christ. What am I alone? But I am not alone! I am one with the shadowy millions of his followers. I am part in the great solidarity of Christian souls. I am one in that long conflict which has never ceased. And so I take my part more hopefully. I hold on in it more confidently. I know in him that the Lord's victory at last is sure!

Yes, here is the essence of the whole matter! Our best life is not that which we live alone, or which each age lives alone. Our best life is that in which we draw together, and in which we link ourselves and lose ourselves in the great fellowships of the ages. And still, after all the keenest questioning of our time, that fellowship which began in Christ, and still continues in his name, stands as the best. And so in that communion we once more take our places, and try to consecrate our hearts anew to its high meaning and its holy service.—*Brooke Herford.*

THE STILL HOUR.

"HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER THEE."

"He shall give his angels charge
Over thee in all thy ways."
Though the thunders roam at large,
Though the lightning round me plays,
Like a child I lay my head
In sweet sleep upon my bed.

Though the terror come so close,
It shall have no power to smite;
It shall deepen my repose,
Turn the darkness into light.
Touch of angels' hands is sweet,
Not a stone shall hurt my feet.

All thy waves and billows go
Over me to press me down,
Into arms so strong I know
They will never let me drown.
Ah! my God, how good thy will!
I will nestle and be still.

—*Alice Freeman Palmer.*

"CAN I MAKE GOD REAL?"—1. Let me think how God became real to me, because I cannot make him real to others unless I am sure of him myself. I came to know God first through human love and kindness, did I not? I was sure of God's love by the goodness of the men and women whom I knew. Perhaps it was my father's or my mother's love which first suggested to me what God's love might be. I also learned about the life of Jesus; and the more I understood him, the better did I seem to understand God. From these two experiences I firmly came to believe that the best way to know God is to know good men. 2. Why, then, can I not live so that men may see God in me? I can, if I will, let my life be controlled by the spirit of love. This is only another way of saying that I can try to do as God would do in my place, that men may see my good works, and glorify not me, but my Father which is in heaven. 3. This is, at first, a very hard task; but ought I, for that reason, to shirk from attempting it? The beginnings are always hard, and I ought not to be satisfied with easy things. Anything that promises so much is difficult at first. 4. It may seem almost presumptuous for me to think of doing as God would do in my place. It *would* be presumptuous if I did not believe that God made me his image. I am the son of God. A son may try to show his father's spirit, because his father's blood is in his veins. So I can try to do as God would do, because his life is in mine. 5. Jesus made God real, because everything he did was God-like. May I not become enough like Jesus to do my part to make God real, even as the glory of the sun is made real in the tiniest flower? 6. The most glorious thing I can do is to make men see God in me. To do that I must be a son of God to them, full of the spirit of kindness and of love; for only thus can God be made real.—*From the "Unitarian."*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.?

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

"The Fair God," Lew Wallace; "Jonathan and his Continent," Max O'Rell; "Elements of Drawing," Ruskin; "Tristram of Blent," Anthony Hope; "Utopia," Sir Thomas More; "Lay of the Last Minstrel," Scott; "Letters of Madame de Sévigné"; "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," Drummond; "The Master of the Magicians," E. S. Phelps and H. D. Ward; "The Scottish Chiefs"; "The Rescue"; "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," O. W. Holmes; "The Earl of Chatham," Macaulay; "A Peep at Number Five"; "Goldsmith's Poetical Works"; "Cushing's Manual"; "Smith's Classical Dictionary"; "Birds and Flowers," Mary Howitt; "Venetia," Disraeli; "Ecce Deus"; Worcester's "History"; "History of the White Mountains."

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then

omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club Secretary

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1 I would like to have a first reader of any kind, just so it has the alphabet. Any kind of good reading will be gladly received by us this winter, as we are going to move to a strange place. My future address will be Waxahachie, Ellis County, Texas. Wishing you all a Happy New Year, (Mrs.) Ada V. Wann.

2. I want to thank the kind friends for reading sent me, as some sent no address. I have not received anything to read for some time, and would be pleased to get some books, to help pass off the dark, lonely winter hours. I like good novels. I would be glad of some books for my little girls, five and nine years old. Will some one please send reading to Lester Bowman, Petra, Caldwell County, North Carolina,—a boy aged nine years? He is an invalid, and such a bright little fellow! His mother is also very delicate, and would appreciate any reading,—story books or anything for him to read, as she is always trying to do something to amuse him. Mrs. T. A. Greer, Petra, Caldwell County, North Carolina.

3. *Dear Cheerful Letter,*—I do enjoy reading your pages, also the good books and magazines the friends have so kindly sent me. I do not know how I am ever going to repay them. I hope they will find it "more blessed to give than to receive." Some time ago I had a letter from one of the Cheerful Letter friends. She asked me some questions, but failed to give the name of her post-office; gave street and number, but did not give city, and the postmark was too indistinct to tell by. If she will write again, I will gladly reply. I enjoy the reading, and pass it on to our neighbors. There are two girls near who live with their grandfather. Their mother and grandmother are dead, so they lead a lonely life. We share our reading with them and others also. Mrs. O. J. Thompson now lives in Phœnix, Arizona, where they went for their daughter's health. I thank the friends who have so kindly remembered me, and wish you a Happy New Year. Myrtle A. Ford, Danville, Missouri.

4. Henry M. Bascom, Hyatt, North Carolina, will be grateful for "Ben-Hur."

5. Mrs. C. B. Merrick, 14 Eighth Avenue, Haverhill, Mass., asks for "Children of the Tenements."

6. "Ten Nights in a Bar-room," "Ships that pass in the Night," or any reading will be thankfully received by Mrs. Avie Turner, Bullard, Texas.

7. Dove Hundley, Martinsville, Henry County, Virginia, fifteen years of age, will be glad of suitable reading.

8. The *Christian Herald* is asked for by Mrs. Mary J. Brooks, Poe, Kansas.

9. Will some of the many kind readers of *Cheerful Letter* please send the *Christian Herald* after reading? I would be very grateful for the same. I am still a shut-in. Emily A. Downing, Newington, New Hampshire.

10. Miss Ella Halstead, Ainsworth, Nebraska, asks for a copy of Will Carleton's "Poems."

11. Mrs. Ella McAferty, 416 Third Street, Olympia, Washington, will be thankful for reading for her family which consists of husband and two boys, sixteen and ten years of age.

12. Mrs. F. Joy Lacy, Washington, Louisiana, asks for "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," or any of Egerton Castle's books.

13. Mr. J. W. Phonts, Furches, North Carolina, will be glad of any reading. He is very deaf, and has to depend upon reading for company. He also asks that reading be sent to Mateal Rose of Furches, a very bright girl of nine years, and one of a large family.

14. Mrs. E. L. Jones, Mannsville, Indian Territory, would like to receive "Ishmael." (What is the author's name? ED.)

15. Mrs. W. F. Galloway, having moved from New Linden to Hatteras, North Carolina, writes that she will be glad of any reading, as she will need it more in her new home.

16. Lillie Curran, Hyatt's, Anson County, North Carolina, would be glad to receive three Harrington's "Primers."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

CONCERNING OBEDIENCE.

"Margery, will you please go downstairs and get me a glass of water?"

"O mamma! I've just got my dolly all ready for a bath!"

"All right!" said Helen, pleasantly, "I'll get it myself."

I searched my sister's face in vain for a suggestion of sarcasm, and, not approving of her placidity, said to the child,—

"I'm surprised, Margery, that you wouldn't do that for your dear mother."

"I do lots of things," was her reply.

"Yes, you do, darling," said her mother. "Auntie hasn't been here long enough to see how helpful you are."

"You see,' said Helen, turning to me, "I draw a decided line between commands and requests. If I *tell* Margery to do a thing, I expect her to do it. If I *ask* a favor of her, she should, in my opinion, have the privilege of refusing. She rarely does refuse, as you will have many opportunities of seeing. It is easy to ask too much of these willing little hands and feet. By turning their help into a burden I could make the children ungracious."

"Then you do believe in obedience?" I asked.

"Most certainly. I am sufficiently old-fashioned to think it does not hurt a child to mind. He thus learns to respect rightful authority. Acts of obedience to proper and recognized authority prepare the child for his later life. There will always be something for him to obey. It is not easy for him to give up his own will, even for the sake of right; but, if this is expected of him in childhood, he is prepared to recognized the importance of right all through his life. The child that begins by obeying a good and conscientious parent will naturally be better prepared to obey his own conscience in later years, and to have a more correct conscience; and he will be a better, because a law-abiding citizen.

"The proper time for unreasoning obedience is at the beginning of the child's life. In this period it is the child's safeguard. Therefore it should be prompt, without question or explanation of the reasonableness of the command. The child should be taught to trust to his parents' judgment in all matters. If explanations are to be given, let them come *after* obedience, I say, not before. We need not fear Casabiancan experiences. For one such illustration of evil resulting from literal obedience we have hundreds of lives saved through the same cause.

"Where the child has not been trained to respect and defer to his parents' wishes, we often see the anomalous situation of a young man or a young woman, actually dependent on the father for each day's supply of food and clothing, openly disrespectful, and often scorning the father's simplest wishes. The domestic training in such instances may have developed beautiful qualities in the parents (!),—gentleness, sweetness, and submission; but it has been a failure with respect to the children."—"*As the Twig is bent,*" *Susan Chenery.*

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

(*Continued.*)

In 1833 began the great work in which, for twenty years, Lord Ashley was to take so prominent a part,—factory legislation.

Toward the close of the seventeenth century the value of the muslins and calicoes which England annually received from India was about £160,000. During the eighteenth century the importation of Indian piece-goods into this country, despite legislative enactments intended to foster the home manufacture of cotton fabrics by prohibiting the weaving of Indian muslin and calicoes, rose to the annual value of £1,250,000; and the acme of this increasing trade was reached in 1806, when our importations from India of such goods as are now the staple of the industry of Lancashire amounted to £2,000,000. "From this date there is a decline, great and rapid, till England becomes an exporter of what she had previously im-

ported so largely, and is able not only to furnish cotton goods of every variety and quality for the supply of all her own wants, but also to carry the produce of her looms ten thousand miles across the seas, and 'placing them at the doors of the Indian consumer, undersell the goods made by his own hands from cotton grown in his own garden.'"

It was to the inventions and improvements in machinery that this wonderful change was due. Up to the year 1738 the English hand-loom weaver was in no better case than the "rude, unlettered Indian"; but in 1738 John Kay, of Bury, substituted the fly-shuttle for the hand-shuttle, by which the production of the hand-loom was trebled. Other improvements followed; and in 1767 Mr. James Hargreaves, a hand-loom weaver of Blackburn, patented his "spinning-jenny." So great was the saving of labor effected by this machine that the spinners were up in arms: they broke into his house and destroyed the machine. When, however, its advantages became apparent, fresh machines were brought into use; but these in like manner were destroyed, and Hargreaves quitted Lancashire in disgust, and settled in Nottingham, where he erected a mill.

Following close upon the inventions of Hargreaves came those of Richard Arkwright and Samuel Compton, by whose genius the production of yarn had increased three hundred-fold; and to these again succeeded the inventions of Dr. Cartwright, a clergyman of the Church of England, and of Mr. Robert Millar, a calico-printer of Glasgow, so that toward the end of the last century (the eighteenth century) the condition of the cotton manufacturing population was completely changed. Instead of working in their own homes, they were obliged to work in mills; and, instead of being comparatively their own masters, working when they would, they were under masters who made them work for what wages they chose to give and during what hours they chose to dictate.

Remonstrance was in vain. Water could now be employed to do the harder part of the work formerly done by the men, who, if they were refractory, could be sent adrift; and machinery was invented which children could manage with almost as much success as adults.

In this way a demand for child-labor was created, and the supply was not deficient. But it was effected in a manner which scarcely seems credible to the humanity of to-day. Large bodies of children were drafted from the work-houses of London, Edinburgh, and other great cities, and placed in the mills as "apprentices," where, at the direction of sordid overseers, they were worked unmercifully, and treated with such brutality that the recital is too sickening for narration.

As early as 1796 voices were raised in protest against the cruel wrongs inflicted on these poor children, who were continually being sent down into Lancashire by barge-loads from the London work-houses; but, in the excitement of the stirring events that were then occurring at home and abroad, these voices were unheeded. Meantime, the condition of these unfortunate children was growing from bad to worse, until at last the cruelty of the system under which they were held was hardly paralleled by the abominations of negro slavery. A horrible traffic had sprung up. Child-jobbers scoured the country for the purpose of purchasing children to sell them again into the bondage of factory slaves. The waste of human life in the manufactories to which the children were consigned was simply frightful. Day and night the machinery was kept going, one gang of children working it by day and another set at night, while in times of pressure the same children were kept working day and night by remorseless taskmasters.

The horrors of the Factory System are scarcely conceivable to this generation; and, if a few details are given here, it is not to furnish a "harrowing description," but to indicate what was the actual state of things which cried aloud for the interference of the legislature.

Under the "Apprentice System" bargains were made between the churchwardens and overseers of parishes and the owners of factories, and the pauper children—some as young as five years old—were bound to serve until they were twenty-one.

In some cases alluring baits were held out to them. They were told they would be well clothed and fed, have plenty of money, and learn a trade. These deceptions were practised in order to make the children wish to go, and thus give an opportunity to the traffickers to say that they went as volun-

teers and not under compulsion. Generally the spell was broken when, like live stock, these children were packed in wagons and sent a four days' journey to Nottingham, or wherever their destination might be. If the illusion did not vanish then, it did when the gates of the 'prentice house closed upon them, and they were checked off, according to invoice, and consigned to the sleeping berths alloted to them, reeking with the foul oil with which the bedding of the older hands were saturated.

Their first labors generally consisted in picking up loose cotton from the floor. This was done amidst the burring din of machinery, in an average heat of 70° to 90° Fahrenheit, and in the fumes of the oil with which the axles of twenty thousand wheels and spindles were bathed.

"For all day the wheels are droning, turning;
Their wind comes in our faces,
Till our hearts turn, our heads with pulses burning,
The walls turn in their places:
Turns the sky in the high window blank and reeling,
Turns the long light that drops adown the wall,
Turn the black flies that crawl along the ceiling,
All are turning, all the day, and we with all.
And all day the iron wheels are droning,
And sometimes we could pray,
'O ye wheels' (breaking out in a mad moaning)
'Stop! be silent for to-day!'" *

NATURAL HISTORY.

ABOUT CONCH PEARLS.

Many people have the impression that the pearl is found only in the oysters gathered beneath the waters of tropical America, Persia, and India.

It is true that these bivalves frequently secrete the most valuable specimens of the opaque gem, but they cannot claim the exclusive production of these much-sought-for articles of commerce.

Oysters grown in any locality frequently contain a prize, while even the fresh-water clam, which has its home in the beds of the clear-running streams of New England, is largely hunted, in the hope of finding an occasional pearl.

Nearly every boy or girl has paused before some well-kept garden to admire the beautiful conical-shaped shells arranged along the sides of the walls, and wondered what creatures had used these houses for their habitations.

These are the conch-shells; they are found in a great profusion about the Bahamas and West India Islands.

This species of mollusk is pearl-producing, and, although the gems do not rank in price with those taken from the oyster, they are considered by many to be much handsomer, as they are of a most delicate shade of pink, and as a rule are quite large, not infrequently being found the size of a pea.

A perfect one of these dimensions may be purchased in the West Indies for forty or fifty dollars, according to the financial condition of the finder; but in the markets of Boston or New York it would bring a much larger sum.

Some few years since, on Key Francis, a small coral island some twelve miles off the northern coast of Cuba, I met a party of conch-hunters who had come from the mainland.

All they had to do was to roll up their trousers, wade out upon the reefs where the water was shallow, and gather the clumsy fellows as they crawled slowly along the bottom.

The conch-pearl hunters never get very rich: scarcely more than one out of a thousand conch-shells contains a prize, and half a dozen men would not be able to gather and cleanse that number in a day.

The shells find a ready market at one dollar and a half or two dollars per hundred, according to their beauty; and thus the native is enabled to earn a living even if not fortunate enough to obtain a pearl.—*From The Young Idea.*

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To James Freeman Clarke.

BOSTON, August 4, 1833.

This is the third letter I have begun to write to you, my dear James. I do not know why, but it is very difficult to write to you though I have enough to say to you, certainly. I have thought of you all day to-day, because I suppose you began your

* "The Cry of the Children," by Mrs. E. B. Browning.

labors in your own church to-day, and I fancied I could feel a magnetic influence to that effect proceeding from the quarter of Louisville. If I am deceived, I will give up magnetism.

Aunt Julia* and family are expected this week. The physicians have recommended change of scene as the only chance of restoration, and they are accordingly coming to Newton with her; that is, her husband and children. Aunt Campbell cannot come.

Clinton arrived last week. . . . We have had two letters from William since you left us. Another gentleman from St. Louis came the day you left us, and dined with us. He agreed in testifying that Dr. Hoffman was one of the best men in the United States, and that his wife was equally superior; in fact, that there are not two better people in the world. Mother asked if there were many Unitarians in St. Louis, and told him what William said about getting up a society there, at which he was much amused, and declared that there were not fifteen Unitarians in the place. "I don't know much about them, to be sure," said he. "I suppose they are the same as Universalists and Trinitarians." (!) "I am an Episcopalian, and always have been." The day after he left us we had another letter from William, and he said that Hersey B. Goodwin, of Concord, had been preaching there, and had been invited to come and preach next winter.

I have just seen an extract from *Blackwood*, in which Mr. North launches forth into a strain of panegyric on our cousins, Isaac and Henry McLellan. Henry is amiable and enlightened, he says; and Isaac has feeling and fancy, is simple and natural, has an affecting tone of cheerfulness and solemnity; and Mr. North has an affectionate respect for him.

I think now that writing is the only method of communication. I shall not like it so well as I have done, and perhaps, by the time we meet again, I shall be able to appreciate the privilege of speech. You will have done so much duty of that sort that you will be quite able to "embody and unbosom" "that which is most within you," while I shall still live and die unheard, "with a most voiceless thought" and, worse yet, a most *useless* thought. Still, Jamie dear, if your thoughts are useful, I am content with that.

*The mother of General Wheeler.

To James Freeman Clarke.

BOSTON, August 31, 1833.

My Dear James,—Your letters have arrived—to Mother, to Samuel, to grandfather, to Helen, to Miss P., to M. F. (2), to Mr. Chapman—to all but me. I hope it is because you feel that you can neglect most, and with the greatest impunity, those that you love the best. (I am glad you wrote first to all these, nevertheless.)

Sam sailed last Tuesday, with a fine wind, fair weather, and cheerful spirits, well laden with comforts of all sorts, protections, and Spanish passports.

The Southern Phœnix, Miss Walton, has at last arrived. We were prepared to find her not handsome, but supposed, of course, she would be striking. Alas! there is nothing, absolutely nothing, in her appearance to captivate the imagination. She has a commonplace face, with a look of cultivation and extreme good-humor and kind-heartedness, but no beauty, to captivate either the senses or the soul. I wonder at her success. It is not usual for simple good-humor to be so universally appreciated. True, she has intelligence, but not an unusual quantity; accomplishments in profusion; sings like an angel; dances like a fairy; draws like Angelica Kaufmann; speaks six living languages, and reads three dead ones. But, then, she makes no display of this; is quite unaffected; has a simple animation; wonders at all she sees; and, above all, is pleased with everything. Maintains that the Northerners have not cold hearts nor cold manners nor cold weather. Thinks commencement delightful, having never heard any public speaking but one Fourth of July oration, one eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, and some sermons. Is enchanted with the salutatory and valedictory orations, because they sound so euphonious, and she never heard any Latin spoken or read except by herself. She was infinitely disappointed not to see S., though she said they laughed at her in Augusta for her attentions to him: but she thought him very interesting. I wish you knew her, and then you could explain the riddle of her popularity. I should not wonder at her being a general favorite, but I do wonder that the fashionable crowd can appreciate such qualities, and over-appreciate them, too.

One circumstance I have not mentioned, which cannot be supposed to have any weight; that is, that she is immensely rich.

I heard William Channing* preach last Sunday, and should like to hear him again to-morrow. I think he is truly evangelical. His sermon contained the words of truth fitly spoken. He is impressive, penetrating, and captivating. What a richly stored mind every sentence betrays! What a poetic feeling many words reveal! The text was, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" I never knew before that it meant "What shall a man *take* in exchange for his soul?" I would at first have denied his assertion that every conscientious person must remember that he had often offered his soul in exchange for some trifle; but I could no longer question it when he called up all the follies and affectations by which we endanger the health of our souls, thereby, in fact, offering them. I felt this, and was ready to acknowledge that there was no health in me. I should not wonder if he should turn out a *searching preacher*.

I have not told you of Henry McLellan's illness, because I hoped to be able to tell you of his recovery. He has been for the last fortnight fluctuating between life and death in the extremity of a typhus fever.

I have sent Prof. P. the copy of "Robert Hall" that he demanded. I am glad that you write to him. He can tell you exactly what to do better than any other person, as he did exactly right himself, always.

William Eliot comes to see me sometimes. He depends much on writing to you, he says, and that you were of great service to him. He really seems to feel the want of you, more than any other person that I have seen. When Miss Peabody† said she had been writing to you, the day before you left us, I asked her not to send the letter at once, because I thought it would be better for you, on first arriving, to have nothing to recall your thoughts homeward; that it might disturb your self-possession to have anything backward interfere at that time. But I soon reflected that I had no right to undertake the arrangement of things, and therefore begged her to send it; and I am glad that I did not persist in my unwarrantable presumption, since you were glad to have it, and it was of service to you. Dear James, my heart is with you and with Sam on his lonely voyage. Each separation is worse than the last. I know we can never be all together again (particularly if we expect it); for you have remarked, as well as I, that we never have what we expect. But, then, if we are cheerful and obedient children of our good Father, we shall have enough happiness.

* William Henry Channing.
† Elizabeth P. Peabody.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

I.

Rhymed Acrostic.

1. A noted battle, England's boast.
2. An island on the English coast.
3. A Spartan general, brave and bold.
4. All victors wore in days of old.
5. A people, God's peculiar care.
6. A province lost to France, the fair.
7. A poet who can hours beguile.
8. The famous "serpent of the Nile."
9. A Western State we next must name.
10. A general of lasting fame.
11. One of seven hills, of great renown.
12. A name beloved in Concord town.
13. A Flemish painter known to fame,
    You'll give without delay his name
    These initials place with care,
    You'll see a poet's name is there.

(*St. Nicholas.*)

II.

Divided Words.

Example: Take half of a costly metal and two-thirds of a public house, and form a word meaning to control.

Answer. go-ld, ta-*vern*, govern.

1. Take half of a part of a gun and half of a depression between two hills, and make a kind of grain.

2. Take half of one of the months and half of imperfect, and make something new.

3. Take half of give up and two-thirds of skilful, and make always.

4. Take half of magnificent and half of plainly, and make to provide.

5. Take half of a beautiful combination of metals and half of to exclude the light, and make shattered.

(*St. Nicholas.*)

III.

Dickens Acrostic.

All the characters described may be found in Dickens's works. When rightly guessed and placed one below the other, the initials will spell the name by which a desperate "waterside character" was known

1. The Christian name of this "waterside character."

2. The Christian name of the boy who asked for "some more."

3. An old man employed to draw old Paul Dombey's coach.

4. Part of the name bestowed on Thomas Balderstone in a sketch by "Boz."

5. The Christian name of Mr. Peggotty's niece.

6. The surname of a half-crazed youth who joins in the Gordon riots.

7. A friend of Mr. Jackson's.

8. The surname of the hero in one of Dickens's stories.

9. The surname of one of Mr. Marten's pupils.

10. The surname of a turnkey at the Fleet prison.

11. The surname of a pupil of Bradley's Headstone.

12. The surname of a character in Miss Nettie Ashford's romance.

13. The surname of a journeyman employed by Joe Gargery.

14. The surname of a gloomy old bachelor who figures in "The Bloomsbury christening."

(*St. Nicholas.*)

Answers to Puzzles in January Number.

I. 1. Cadiz.
2. Hartford.
3. Rome.
4. Iceland.
5. Spain.
6. Texas.
7. Ohio.
8. Paris.
9. Hudson.
10. Erie.
11. Rhone.
12. Cuba.
13. Obi.
14. London.
15. Ural.
16. Maine.
17. Berne.
18. Uruguay.
19. Sahara.

II. United—unite, you, yew, ew, knighted, knight, night, nigh, eye, aye, I.
States—state, stay, eight, ate, a

III. *Pi.*

"Fair and green in the marsh is June,
Wide and warm in the sunny noon;
The flowering rushes fringe the pool,
With slender shadows, dim and cool.
From the low bushes "bob-white" calls,
Into his nest a rose-leaf falls;
The blue-flag fades, and through the heat
Far off the sea's faint pulses beat."

MONTHLY REPORT.

The fourth regular meeting of the season was held at 25 Beacon Street on Friday, January 1. In the absence of Miss Clarke, Miss Langmaid occupied the chair.

Thirty-two members were present.

The reports of the secretary and treasurer were read and approved.

Miss Brown reported that 103 travelling libraries were in use, containing in all about 2,500 books.

Twenty-eight States have received one or more of these libraries. There are seventeen in Virginia, fifteen in North Carolina, eleven in Texas, and eleven in Maine.

Fifty-six Branches have sent libraries; King's Chapel, nine; Chestnut Hill, eight; First Parish, Dorchester, six.

Fourteen applications for libraries are waiting for a response.

At the meeting twenty-seven committees were represented: two sent reports by mail. Each mentioned the Christmas package which had been sent and received.

The representative from Waltham read an interesting letter from a correspondent in Montana.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.50 A.M.

FRANCES B. FISHER,
Assistant Secretary.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Dr. J. F. Campbell, 900 East Jackson Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The only conclusive evidence of a man's sincerity is that he gives himself for a principle. Words, money, all things else, are comparatively easy to give away; but, when a man makes a gift of his daily life and practice, it is plain that the truth, whatever it may be, has taken possession of him.—*Lowell.*

It may indeed be more blessed to give than to receive; but, when the former luxury is not within one's honest reach, it is blessed, too, to receive from those one thoroughly loves.—*George S. Merriam.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The Travelling Libraries have now become an important part of Cheerful Letter work. In order that this department may be thoroughly organized and systematized, Miss Louise Brown, Box 91, South Framingham, Mass., has kindly consented to take it in charge. Will those interested in these libraries, and desiring information, kindly address Miss Brown as above?

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

Moderation is a little stream which flows softly, but freshens everything along its course.—*Madame Swetchine.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The committee call the attention of all readers of the *Cheerful Letter* and members of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to the change in our Direction printed this month. Those who desire to join the Cheerful Letter Exchange and to have correspondents assigned to them are requested to write to our assistant secretary, Miss Frances B. Fisher, 491 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., instead of to Miss Langmaid as before. Miss Langmaid will retain a portion of the work; but, in order to meet the increasing requirements of the secretary's duties, it is necessary to have the aid of a second secretary.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose thee letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,— Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,— Miss Bertha Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY,— Miss Frances B. Fisher, 491 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Requests for correspondents should be sent to Miss Fisher.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,— Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,— Mrs. Charles T. Catlin, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks should be made payable to Mary Louise Catlin.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Mrs. Catlin at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Mrs. Catlin, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.